

2004 King County Comprehensive Plan Update

Area Zoning Study

Department of Development and Environmental Services

Study Area: Covington/Poppie
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Summary

This area of approximately 31 acres is currently designated for Rural Residential use in the King County Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. The zoning is RA-5-SO, Rural Residential – one home per five acres within a special district overlay.

This study was in response to a request that the area be redesignated Urban and zoned Industrial.

It is recommended that the land-use designation and zoning remain unchanged.

Background

The study area is comprised of eight parcels, as detailed in the attached list of parcels. The properties are mostly vacant or developed with single-family residences. Staff observed a construction of a storage building on parcel 3522059038 (Building permit number B03M1116).

One parcel in the area, parcel 3522059085, contained several non-residential uses, including business offices and heavy construction equipment parked on site. There are two pending code enforcement actions involving this property, for operating a business in a zone where it is not allowed (E02G0320), and for clearing and grading within a sensitive area (E0200786). Subsequent to the complaints, the owner applied for a permit for clearing and grading for construction of a construction storage yard (A02PM060), also pending.

The study area includes mapped streams and Class 1 wetlands. Big Soos Creek, a chinook salmon distribution stream, runs through the adjacent property to the east.

The study area has only one small point of adjacency to the Urban Growth Area and the City of Covington at the northeast tip of the area. The owner of the parcel that includes that point of adjacency has written to object to the redesignation of study area to Urban.

Applicable King County Comprehensive Plan Policies:

- R- 102** The Rural Area designations shown on the King County Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map include areas that are rural in character and meet one or more of the following criteria:
- a. Opportunities exist for significant commercial or non-commercial farming and forestry (large-scale farms and forest lands are designated as Natural Resource Lands);
 - b. The area will help buffer nearby Natural Resource Lands from conflicting urban uses;
 - c. The area is contiguous to other lands in the Rural Area, Natural Resource Lands or large, predominantly environmentally sensitive areas;

- d. There are major physical barriers to providing urban services at reasonable cost, or such areas will help foster more logical boundaries for urban public services and infrastructure;
- e. The area is not needed for the foreseeable future that is, well beyond the 20-year forecast period to provide capacity for population or employment growth;
- f. The area has outstanding scenic, historic, environmental, resource or aesthetic values that can best be protected by a Rural Area designation; or
- g. Significant environmental constraints make the area generally unsuitable for intensive urban development.

R- 103 King County's Rural Area is considered to be permanent and shall not be redesignated to an Urban Growth Area until reviewed pursuant to the Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A.130(3) and Countywide Planning Policy FW-1.

R- 414 Existing industrial uses in the Rural Area outside of Rural Towns or the designated industrial area adjacent to the Rural Neighborhood of Preston shall be zoned rural residential but may continue if they qualify as legal, nonconforming uses.

Analysis:

Recently, King County and the cities within the county completed a detailed assessment of the development capacity within our Urban Growth Area, as envisioned by the Growth Management Act and the Countywide Planning Policies. This assessment, known as the "Buildable Lands Report," indicates there is sufficient development capacity within our Urban Growth Area to accommodate forecast growth for at least the next 10 years. The study area is located in the Rural Area and is not characterized by urban development. In addition, a significant part of the study area includes streams and wetlands and associated buffers that would preclude development at Urban densities, and which the Rural designation helps to protect.

Policy R-414, states that where there is existing industrial/commercial use in a Rural area, the appropriate zoning is Rural Residential, but that use can continue provided that it qualifies as a legal, non-conforming use.

Conclusions:

The Rural Area designation for this property is appropriate because the study area is contiguous to Rural properties, is not needed to accommodate growth and development targets, and contains or is adjacent to areas with significant environmental constraints, consistent with policy R-102.

The land use map and zoning amendments requested in the study area are not consistent with policy R-103 because there already exists sufficient capacity within the Urban Area to support growth targets.

The existing land use designation and zoning is consistent with policy R-414.

Therefore there is no justification to redesignate the Rural properties to Urban at this time.

Executive Staff Recommendation:

No proposed changes to the Rural land use designation or zoning in the study area.